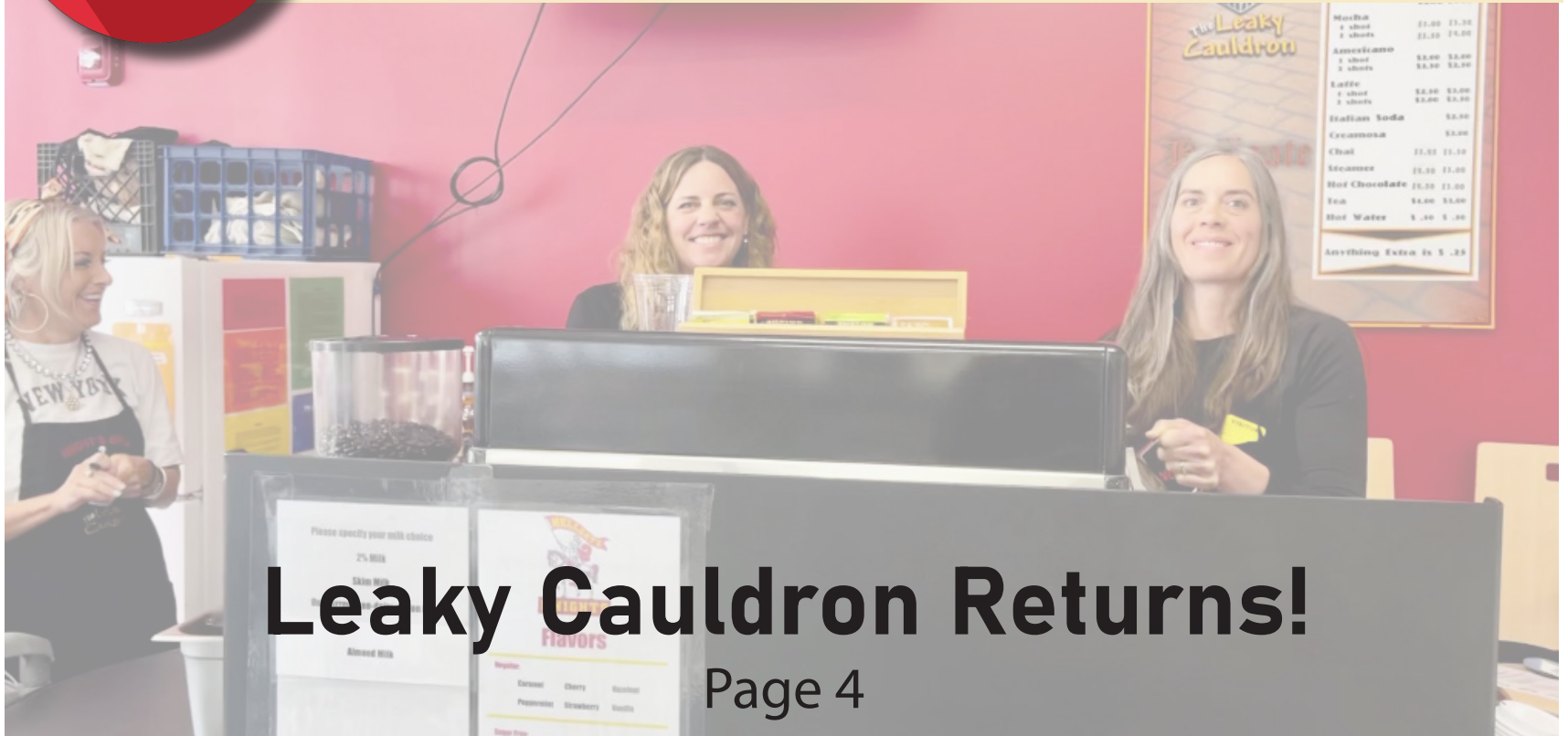




The Hellgate Lance



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Hellgate Lead Testing Results Shock Students

Asa Stuart
Reporter

In early 2020, Montana required all public schools to test their water faucets and drinking fountains for lead. Schools were

given until Dec. 31, 2021 to test and report the results. In early 2022, Missoula County Public Schools received the test results and 30% of the fixtures were above acceptable levels of lead.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the maximum contaminant level goal (MCLG) for lead is 0 parts per billion (ppb). The MCLG is determined by the EPA and is the level at which drinking lead contaminated water will cause no adverse health effects.

Out of the 63 tested faucets at Hellgate, 44 were in the green zone, which is less than 5 ppb, 12 were in the yellow zone, which is 5 to 15 ppb, and 7 were in the red zone, which is anything over 15 ppb. Out of the 7 red faucets, three were in the hundreds, but one could just be due to a faulty test. In room 284, a south sink tested at 208 ppb, but Bill Fischer, one of Hellgate's custodians, said that the sink has been turned off for months, and they tested it right after it was turned on for the first time. The high test results could be due to a build up of lead and other materials in the faucets.



A closed off water fountain on the second floor. Photo by Asa Stuart.

All drinking fountains, sinks, and other faucets which tested above the threshold have been bagged, labeled, and shut off so they aren't used, and several water dispensers have been set up around the school. When the faucets are replaced, they will be replacing many with newer drinking fountains that include bottle fillers.

For all Missoula County Public Schools, there are only two plumbers, so replacing the faucets will take some time. Because lead can harm younger kids' development, health and learning, replacements will start at the elementary schools and make their way up to high schools.

With the most recent remodel of Hellgate, a new line for water, new plumbing, and new faucets were all added, but only in the new areas. In the science wing that was built in 1988, the worst results were found. However, Jeanette Rankin, a new elementary school up Miller Creek, was built within the past 5 years but also tested for high levels of lead.

For many high school students, the lead in the water has concerned them and made their daily lives difficult. "If you don't have a water bottle it's nearly impossible to find a drink, unless you want to risk drinking lead," said Thalia Lambros, a junior.

With many fountains closed off and the new concern about the risk of drinking from the few remaining open, many students opt to not drink school water.



A water dispenser by the custodial lounge on the second floor by the north-west stairwell. Photo by Asa Stuart.

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The Lance is an award-winning, school-sponsored student publication of Hellgate High School. The Lance has been publishing since 1964. Ad rates are available upon request.

Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the entire paper, its advisers or Hellgate High School.

Key Club Hosts Successful Blood Drive

Ali Caudle
Co-Editor

On April 13, Hellgate's Key Club worked with the Red Cross to facilitate a successful blood drive in the lower gym. At least 30 units of blood were donated by staff and students throughout the day.

"This was the first time in a few years we've done the blood drive. We're doing it through Key Club and [sophomore] Annika Johnston has played a large role. She organized it, and we just brought it back after COVID. We're humble volunteers," said Mabel DeGrandpre, the Key Club treasurer.

Early in 2022, the club discussed events they wanted to put on before the end of the school year. Some members proposed bringing back the blood drive, and Johnston volunteered to take on the role of blood drive coordinator.

"I just went through a process of emailing a coordinator [from the Red Cross] back and forth, trying to find a day that was most effective and making sure everyone could do it. And then it was just about finding the best location and time," said Johnston. They chose the lower gym because it was a large space that was easily accessible - they could bring in the equipment without trouble.

Once the drive was scheduled, Johnston's role involved "getting snacks, checking on everyone registered,

and making sure people were coming."

Registration was set up ahead of time, as the club set a goal of filling 40+ time slots throughout the course of the day. The first was at 10:00 a.m., and the final slot was at 3:00 p.m. A handful of walk-ins and switches were accommodated on the day of the drive, to make up for no-shows and students who were turned away from donating due to disqualifying medical factors.

To spread the word, Key Club members spoke to their classes and manned a table in the commons during lunch from March 28 to April 8. Unknown to most high school students, you are eligible to donate blood at as young as 16 years old with parental consent.

Senior Ruby Jenni was one student who signed up to donate blood after hearing Key Club President Frances Smith promote the blood drive in her IB English class. "I signed up because it wouldn't take me that much work or effort and people need blood. I can do it," said Jenni. "And a musician I'm a fan of is really big on donating blood, so it's kind of to keep his legacy going."

The timing for this blood drive worked out perfectly. The country has seen a shortage of blood donations in the past few years. Most donors are older folks, and as they age out, young people aren't replacing them fast enough. According to the Red Cross, only 3% of eligible donors donate yearly.

However, in January 2022 amid the Omicron case surge, the Red Cross declared the first ever "blood shortage." Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses and phlebotomists have been in short supply, and donors have been reluctant to come out to blood drives and donate.

Hellgate's Key Club was far from the only group to pause organizing blood drives for the last two years. This pause, alongside the shuttering of donation centers and the reluctance of donors, has drastically reduced the nation's blood supply to critical levels. According to KPAX, this shortage significantly affected Western Montana.

"There's just a big need for blood in our community right now," said Smith. "It's really important to give back and support the people who need help. There's always a need for more blood. So I think it feels pretty cool to be part of something that actually makes a difference and it's a pretty small sacrifice to make that can actually really help a lot of people."

Senior Clara Hay also donated blood, and shared she thought it was a "fun and rewarding" experience.

Jenni described the process. "I filled out the test, answered the questions. They're obviously very personal

but important because it's your blood. So, and then they pricked my finger which didn't hurt. Then they stabbed the needle in, which didn't hurt. And yeah, I just talked to the guy taking my blood about what I'm doing in life these days," she said. "And then I got to feel my blood bag, which was warm, love that, and that was cool. Thought of the vampire diaries the whole time, how they drink out of blood bags. Kind of wanted to try it, but I decided I wouldn't."

To everyone's relief, the blood drive ran smoothly with no major issues. Key Club volunteers helped set up and take down the equipment, checked donors in, and provided donors with snacks and a t-shirt after their donation. This drive was successful because of Key Club's hard work.

"Everybody came out, everybody really supported it. So that was awesome," said Key Club advisor, Charlene Young. "It's just been great that after two years of not being able to have [the blood drive], we finally are able to have it."

Johnston was proud of the club. She hopes they can host not one, but two blood drives next year. "We are kind of in a blood shortage and I feel like it's important to make sure we're trying our best to help people out, whether that is giving blood, or wearing masks if there's another COVID outbreak," she said. "It's important to consider not just yourself, but helping others as you're going through life."



Hellgate teacher Lindsey Thompson donated blood. Photo by Ali Caudle.



Key Club volunteers staffed a waiting area, providing snacks to donors like Clara Hay and Ruby Jenni. Photo by Ali Caudle.



Key Club leadership Mabel DeGrandpre and Frances Smith chat with Charlene Young at the check-in table. Photo by Ali Caudle.

Hellgate's Leaky Cauldron Makes a Comeback

Maggie Vann
Co-Editor

It's always difficult to stay awake during the first couple periods of school. Luckily, Hellgate's Coffee Cart, the Leaky Cauldron, is making a comeback. Sara Pierce, one of the parents who helps run the cart, said, "The rumors are true, we are looking at getting the coffee cart up and running again. We closed because COVID shut down in person learning. We have been waiting for COVID cases to get to a level where it made sense to bring the volunteers and delivery people associated with the cart into the school while still keeping staff, students and volunteers safe."

The Leaky Cauldron opened Apr. 18 and will be open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. However, Pierce explained that this may change depending on how the cart opening goes.

The Leaky Cauldron's return is exciting for many juniors and seniors, but freshmen and sophomores have never had the opportunity to see or order from the cart due to

COVID-19. Despite never having the coffee cart at Hellgate, freshman Faith You said, "I am very excited about the coffee cart opening, as it seems to have been a core piece of 'Hellgate Culture' back before COVID came around. Additionally, students will have access to their favorite drinks at their fingertips, and it will be far more convenient for us."

Hellgate's coffee cart will have "a variety of drinks in 12 and 16 oz sizes," said Pierce. Of course coffee options will be available. These include: americanos, lattes and mochas. A variety of non-coffee drinks will also be served: hot chocolate, steamers, chai, italian sodas, cremosas and hot tea. These options are also posted in the cafeteria where the coffee cart will be located.

Amelia Fogarty, senior, said she is beyond excited to enjoy chai at the coffee cart. She explained, "It [the coffee cart] was always such a great part of my day, I am so happy it's coming back. I missed its presence and I missed how close it was. It sucks having to drive so far to get coffee and it's great to have it at school."

All of the proceeds from the cart "go back to the school to fund programs for students and teachers," Pierce said. However, she also explained, "To make any volunteer organization work, we need volunteers. The problem with having the cart shut down for two years is that most of the people who know how the cart operates had their students graduate or have students about to graduate. We lost or are about to lose most of our parent base."

The Knights Of The Round Table (KORT) is a parent-based organization that was established in 2007 and is responsible for running and managing the Leaky Cauldron. According to the Facebook page for KORT, the mission is to "raise funds that provide



Photo courtesy of Sara Pierce.

support and financial resources to school-related programs in the areas of academics, languages and arts; and to promote communications and involvement among parents, staff members and students in order to enable and inspire our student body to achieve academic and personal success."

If you have a parent who would like to join KORT, the organization is always looking for parents who want to be involved. You can contact Sara Pierce at sarapierce@bresnan.net.

When stopping at the cart, you don't have to worry about having cash on you. It also takes credit and debit cards. So stop by the coffee cart after spring break and enjoy tasty drinks located conveniently in the cafeteria. But remember, the cart is run by a group of parents who are new to making drinks. Pierce said, "We are learning as we go. Come by, say 'hi', and be patient while we figure out or remember how this whole coffee cart works."

The parents are excited that the Leaky Cauldron is back. "We are excited to get back into the building, see your faces, and give back to the Hellgate community," said Pierce.



Hellgate moms working hard at the Leaky Cauldron. Photo by Maggie Vann.

Ukrainian Mayor Speaks to Hellgate Students

Ali Caudle
Co-Editor

On April 14, at the start of office hours, roughly 40 students filed into the Knight Hall. Their eyes turned to the Zoom call projected on the screen. Minutes later, a young man wearing a dark blue t-shirt and a brown flannel logged on. His blond hair was neatly combed, and his blue eyes had a determined steely gaze, the look of a weary leader.

AP Human Geography students had been looking forward to this. Teacher Velita Rholl facilitated a unique opportunity for Hellgate students: a chance to chat over Zoom with the mayor of Kopychyntsi, a small town in Ukraine.

Bogdan Kelichavyi is only 30 years old, one of the youngest mayors in the country. He is the mayor of Kopychyntsi, and he oversees the surrounding villages with a combined population of approximately 13,500. He was elected in 2020, with a rough start to his political career.

“Here in Ukraine, we have war, as you may have heard. This is definitely something that I was not prepared for,” said Kelichavyi. “I started in the middle of COVID. There were so many restrictions, so many tough times. And then it happened that we had war, Russia attacked us.”

On Feb. 24, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the launch of a military invasion into Ukraine, infamously claiming it was to “denazify” Ukraine. While many analysts predicted a swift victory for the Russians, the morale of Ukrainians, supported by foreign nations, has proved strong enough to fend them off.

As of print, the Russians are focusing on a campaign in Eastern Ukraine, in the Donbas region. The goal appears to be to capture territory to link mainland Russia with Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula that was seized by Russia in 2014. Simultaneously, success in the east would provide Russian propagandists with material to persuade their population that the war was successful - even though many of the goals of the early stages did not come to fruition.

During the 35 minutes students could chat with Kelichavyi, Rholl acted as a moderator, asking questions students had prepared ahead of time. If students came up with a new question during the call, they could pass a sheet of paper up to her through the rows, and Rholl would ask it for them.

In response to a question a student asked about what happened when Russia first invaded, Kelichavyi reflected on the capacity of

humans to adapt. “We have this tendency to adapt to everything and I feel like, this almost two months of war we’ve had with Russia right now, it’s like a separate mind because it was very intense,” he said. “In the beginning, everybody was so scared. We didn’t expect that, we didn’t know what to do. It was really hard to get some sleep.”

“The situation on the front lines, of course, like, it’s scary. You have scary pictures from different parts of Ukraine. We expect to have a big war right now, part of the war rumors, but here locally, we just tried to, you know, protect ourselves, emotionally, psychologically, so we’re trying to get together as much as we can,” said Kelichavyi. “We do some meetings together, we are having some barbecues together, but of course, when we have alarms, meaning that rockets fly over us, then it means we should stop. We should go to shelters.”

Kelichavyi explained that many of the citizens of his town are learning to accept this as their new reality. “We are trying to create some order now, but then after some time we received a lot of internally displaced people. And we became friends. We started launching projects together.”

Since the war started, they have taken in about 1500 internally displaced people (IDP). These are similar to refugees in that they were forced to flee their home; however, IDPs are people displaced within their home nation, they didn’t leave the country’s borders.

With limited resources, the town has transformed their schools into temporary housing places for IDPs. “We started housing refugees in the kindergarten because we didn’t have beds yet. In kindergarten we have these tiny small mats. So if you put three mats together, it becomes like a whole bed,” said Kelichavyi.

“And then we started using School #1. We have different schooling system here... in our town, our central town, we have School #1 and School #2, those are separate buildings. So in School #1, we have refugees now. Most of them are in the halls, and also in classrooms,” he said.

“We are getting prepared to host more, so we are preparing our School #2 and this time we want to be ready more. We already got some mattresses, we already got some blankets, we’re constructing new mats. We are also installing more shower rooms there, washing machines, laundry, you know all these things that people would need.”

Kelichavyi has a lot of responsibility, but he’s delegating some work to his 26 council

members, and the citizens of Kopychyntsi have stepped up. “Of course we were not prepared for war, we were not preparing for it,” he said.

His role isn’t without danger. “Mayors have been kidnapped. Even some of my friends,” he said. “We don’t have cases where mayors were kidnapped in western Ukraine. But we’re trying to protect ourselves as much as possible. We also created our local defense unions that are protecting the city and protecting us, our entrances and exits from the town are also blocked. And we are controlling who is coming in and out, physically trying to be protected and just trying to do our job. So of course I feel scared a bit, but I’m just trying to do my part of the war.”

The violence has hit close to home. “I mean, my brother is here with me. He lives in the suburbs of Kiev. Just imagine that you live in your town, that you live in a house, and then a rocket flies. You were living on the sixth floor and the rocket came to the 13th floor. And that’s it. A lot of the apartments are destroyed... You were saving money to buy this apartment, your life is around it, and now it’s dangerous to go there,” he said. “It was totally dangerous to stay there. I’m glad that his family moved here on the first day of war. So these are totally not normal things that are happening here.”

Towards the end of the call, Rholl relayed a question from her students: Why did he agree to speak with them? Doesn’t he have better things to do? Kelichavyi answered that he feels like this is his calling, the best thing he can do to help right now is to share the word about the horrors of the war. He wants people in the West to understand their perspective.

“We don’t have so many English speaking mayors in Ukraine. And I felt like this is a good opportunity to present what’s going on here because I remember from history that we have another genocide in Ukraine, in the 1930s, when the Russians killed millions of Ukrainians and nobody knew about that in Western media,” said Kelichavyi. “So I felt like, okay, this is also part of the war. If I cannot be on the front lines, because I’m responsible for my people, this would be another front line. This would be the opportunity to talk publicly about what’s been going on here.”

“Of course, I cannot say everything because there are some military things here, like information that I cannot share, but regarding everything else, like how people feel, what do they feel, and just to show everybody that we are normal, we are like everybody else, we have same veins, we have same dreams, we have the same relationships here. And it’s important that everybody else can understand that, and to show that we didn’t want this war. But we also don’t want to give up our land. We just want to live normally,” he said.

Kelichavyi has spoken with a wide assortment of media outlets, TV stations, nonprofits and education groups, and he’s hoping for more opportunities to speak to Americans. “I’m also trying to promote my town, I’m trying to promote my country, my region, and all the activities that we are doing. Sometimes people donate to us and tell us to scale up and help many more people,” said Kelichavyi. “I know my colleagues, mayors who cannot do anything because they are occupied, they are very close to the front lines. So I feel the responsibility for others.”



Students attentively watch Mayor Bogdan Kelichavyi answer their questions about Ukraine. Photo by Ali Caudle.

Vending Machines Dispense Problems as Well as Food

Alexander Blaide
Reporter

Imagine this: school's out and I've got a few minutes to kill before rehearsal. I forgot a snack, but vending machines are in the commons, so I'll go over and get some Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. I swipe my card and punch in the code E4. Instead, E5 is dispensed and I hear the dissatisfying thud of Skittles - Skittles I didn't ask for nor want. This happened to me recently. The waste of money spent on Skittles is the beginning of the problems associated with the vending machines at Hellgate.

The two vending machines with the most issues are the only two that actually contain snacks, the one in the far side of the commons and the one just adjacent to the front office. Problems can range from incorrect orders, to money being eaten, and even inconsistent snack options. After a quick post on my Instagram story, I received 25 different responses and spoke to a handful of students, seeking their thoughts and possible solutions to the different issues.

Vivi Steinberg, a sophomore, responded with a common complaint, "Nearly every time I've tried to use the vending machines at school, they accept the cash, but then don't give the item." Her card is either not processed or not accepted altogether, however she has been successful with using quarters. She was the first to point out what would become a common theme: the vending machine by the front office.

Echo Meyer, another sophomore, said similar things about how the vending machine by the office would steal money without dispensing the item. That particular vending machine is very strange. Once before a rehearsal, I tried to get a snack from the vending machine by the front office and put in three dollars in cash and was met with a message reading, "PLEASE USE EXACT CHANGE." This was peculiar; why would I need exact change when the amount I paid exceeds the price of the item I want to get? I pushed the change return button and placed the \$1.75 (now

in quarters) needed into the vending machine and it worked just fine. A few days later, I tried to get another snack at this same vending machine and again, I was told I needed exact change. I placed the amount necessary in the machine and my order was refused. The machine would not dispense. I pushed the change return button and got new quarters and tried again. The same thing happened and I was not getting my snack.

In what seemed to be a move of spite from the machine, it gave back my change in the most inconvenient way, a comically large pile of nickels and dimes, unusable just about anywhere else except for the tip jars at Liquid Planet. That's all the issues specific to that machine, but I was unaware of the other problems associated with the other vending machines, particularly, the drink machines.

I never had issues with the drink vending machines, however there were some who did. A surprising response came from junior Cypress Ewan. After stating the options were weak, he explained why he viewed the drink options that way. "The choices are limited to mineral sparkling water and zero sugar sodas when one of the commons' vending machines has regular sweets like Reese's and Snickers or normal Cheetos so obviously health isn't their concern for the weird drinks," he said. He went on to say that serving regular drinks students want would actually be more beneficial, especially with the other drink vending machine giving out Izzes.

Elio House had similar thoughts, saying, "I don't have a problem with healthy options, but I cannot stand the taste of artificial sweetener and that's all that they have - it would be so much nicer to have iced tea or sparkling water." These answers were interesting to read because I was looking at the food ones in particular when preparing this article. After reading their responses, I do see the irony in placing a machine full of healthy drinks next to a machine full of chips and candy. The whole idea seems backward.

So, is there a fix to this? Maybe. Emmaline Derry, a senior who participates in cross country and theater, thinks we need more "real food." She

explained, "I feel like trail mix would be great or even those salted nuts packets from Costco. And maybe some Clif bars or Kind bars or something. Basically anything that I can eat between school and XC, or school and rehearsal if I forget a snack and won't be home for a couple hours." Speaking from experience, when doing school theater, you will be at school for 12 to 14 hours straight and you might not have time to go home. If you forget a snack, you're out of luck.

Interestingly, Derry was the only one who suggested replacing the snacks with more fulfilling options that will satisfy people for longer. I agree with her. I think that changing out the snacks in the machines would be more beneficial for students. Josephine BarDin, a sophomore, suggested just fixing the machines so that they take money properly. She believes doing that will be beneficial to the student body.

I agree with both suggestions. Students have a love/hate relationship with the vending machines. They steal money, give the wrong order, and sometimes don't even make sense. However, we have ideas to change that, whether it's switching the actual snacks or fixing the machines themselves. The machines can go from a joke to something actually useful for students and teachers alike.



The more problematic of the two vending machines.

Photo by Alexander Blaide.

School Schedule

Wilson Freer
Reporter

7
Say What?!

After a little back and forth, and conversations among parents, students, staff, administrators and the MCPS school board, it is finally official: next year, the high school schedule will not return to the original 7:50 start. It will remain the same as this year, except for a switch of office hours on Thursdays. On these days, the first period of the day, second period, will start at 9:40 and office hours will follow, before lunch. How does this compare to the pre-pandemic start time for HHS students and staff?

Birke Labbe (Junior)



“I really like the late start and honestly don’t mind getting out late. But I do think that 7:50 start time could be nice for people that are in sports or something because I know that with this schedule, they can get done really late.”

Eden Maxwell (Junior)



“I prefer the 7:50 start time honestly because starting at nine and going to four just monopolizes the entire day and is really bad for sports practices because then they go really late. And let’s be honest most of us aren’t getting any more sleep because we are just going to bed later so overall I’d be glad to go back.”

Jessica Gustafson (English Teacher)



“I am in support of the new schedule and the schedule that we’ll be continuing next year. I think it allows teenagers to get more sleep. And it allows teachers to get more done in the morning before school starts. And it’s just a more reasonable time for both students and teachers to get enough rest and also accomplish what needs to be done in the morning.”

Nico Petrini (Sophomore)



“We should do a schedule where the timing of our classes changes bi-weekly so athletes who have to leave school early don’t miss the same classes every week.”

Parents Shouldn't Be Able To Refuse Medical Care for Children

Sierra Meissner
Reporter

In the United States, adults over the age of 18 can refuse any type of medical care or treatment, as long as they're competent to make their own decisions. Many religious

groups including Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Amish and Scientologists choose to reject some or all mainstream health care. I have always thought that every religion has a right to their own beliefs. However, refusing medical care for their children because it's against their religion, is a completely different story.

There are parents who refuse medical care for themselves and may allow it for their children, but there are also many who don't allow it for their children either. This can be very problematic for their children because if they don't have all of the recommended shots and treatments it could lead to the child potentially getting sick later on. Children especially need to be taken for frequent checkups, so if anything does go wrong with their health the doctors can fix it before it gets worse. Children are too young to understand that they should have a choice whether or not they want to seek medical care; just because their parents don't, doesn't mean they have to too.

These kids should not have to suffer because of their parents' beliefs. There are currently 19 states that have no religious exemptions to civil child abuse and neglect statutes. Even throughout the COVID pandemic, these laws didn't change. The only kind of child abuse and neglect that's protected by law in many states is faith-based medical neglect. And personally I think by now these laws should be different because of how many children have died from "faith healing." Are these states just going to continue to let these

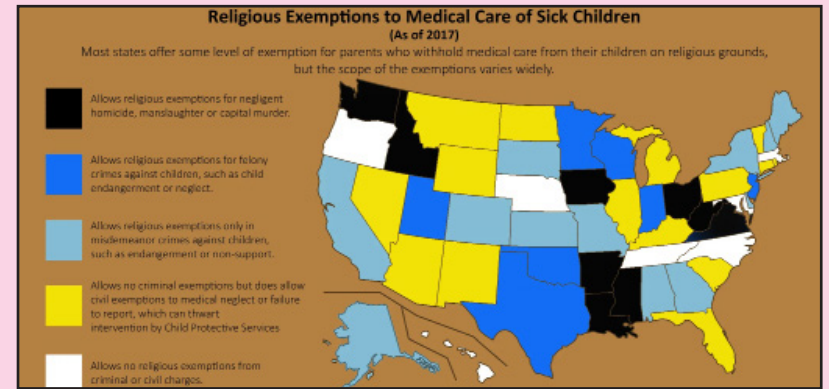


Photo courtesy of Children's Healthcare Is a Legal Duty.

innocent children suffer and die simply because their parents think that medical care isn't necessary?

Even though the number of religious-related medical neglect cases is significantly smaller compared to other types of child neglect in the country, that does not mean that it is alright. I can only hope that these laws will change sooner rather than later so children born into these religious groups will be protected by the law.

Gas Prices Continue to Rise, Causing Financial Hardships

Sierra Meissner
Reporter

As we all know gas prices in America have been rising quickly due to lack of oil. This has brought multiple financial problems for many Americans.

There are a few different reasons for the major change in gas prices. The problem at hand is that Russia is one of the biggest oil imports for the United States and President Biden has decided we are placing sanctions on Russia. He also decided to officially cancel the Keystone pipeline, a \$9 billion oil pipeline that is a symbol of the rising political clout of climate change which has caused the gas prices to increase.

People have started experiencing a lot more financial anxiety, as inflation climbs to historic highs. The current average for gas prices in Montana is \$4.009 per gallon and it is likely that the price of gas will continue to increase. Many high school students aren't financially stable enough to be paying this much for gas while trying to save money for college. "I drive a 1986 Ford Bronco, and with the change in gas prices I went from paying \$40 for a tank to \$60.

It seems like every time I get a pay check all of it goes to gas money," said Isabel Tenham. High schoolers usually have minimum wage jobs so they aren't as financially stable as adults, so how are they expected to pay the same amount for gas?

One of President Biden's goals is to start treating the environment better. He wants to start using electric cars more because they are better for the environment, but for a lot of people, electric cars are too expensive. Even adults are upset about these gas prices because they have other bills to pay on top of the expensive gas. And for many people who live out of town, public transportation isn't even an option. According to GasBuddy's, if tensions in Ukraine aren't resolved soon, the national averages may surpass \$5 per gallon, and they expect it to last through November 2022.

Overall, many Americans are suffering financially because the gas prices are so high. People are angry at President Biden and don't think he is doing what is right for the people of America. Hopefully the prices will go down before November, or it could be a long summer for everyone.



Photo by Sierra Meissner.

Anti-LGBTQ Curriculum Laws Don't Make Anybody Less Gay

Julia Key
Reporter

States in the U.S. are trying to ban LGBTQ+ education, by passing unjust legislation, meant to stifle the voices of LGBTQ+ youth.

The “Parental Rights in Education” bill, also known as the “Don’t Say Gay” bill by many LGBTQ+ advocates and allies, was recently passed in Florida. This bill has become a large controversy in the LGBTQ+ advocate community. “Parental Rights in Education” has disguised homophobia and students’ well-being as a parental issue.

In the first page of this bill it states, “An act relating to parental rights in education; prohibiting school district personnel from discouraging or prohibiting parental notification and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student’s mental, emotional, or physical well-being.”

While this may seem like a normal action to take, many of the advocates against this bill are bringing to light the LGBTQ+ students who could be affected by requiring teachers to “out” students to their parents. But this claim may not be fully supported, an amendment added later in the bill’s creation states, “This subparagraph does not prohibit a school district from adopting procedures that permit school personnel to withhold such information from a parent if a reasonably prudent person would believe that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect, as those terms are defined in s. 39.01.” LGBTQ+ students are still not fully protected from “outing”, but this addition to the bill adds some support for kids in fami-

lies who may not accept their child’s identity.

The line directly after this states, “...prohibiting classroom discussion about sexual orientation or gender identity in certain grade levels or in a specified manner.” This is another widely discussed line in this bill, as it prohibits the discussion of LGBTQ+ topics in class. Right wing lawmakers and parents think that teaching LGBTQ+ topics in class will encourage students to come out, they believe that the amount of students coming out is on the rise because of the rising discussion of LGBTQ+ people.



Photo Courtesy of commondreams.org.

The bill states in an amendment, “Classroom instruction by school personnel or third parties on sexual orientation or gender identity may not occur in kindergarten through grade 3 or in a manner that is not age appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.”

“State standards” is a phrase that I have taken issue with, due to Florida’s lack of them surrounding sex education. Florida schools are not required to teach sex education, and the health curriculum must include the benefits of abstinence, as well as instructing on

the benefits of heterosexual marriage when talking about HIV and AIDS.

This bill alienates students with same-sex parents as well as students who are struggling with identity issues. Having LGBTQ+ education in schools from an early age normalizes LGBTQ+ people and topics. Banning the discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity can affect LGBTQ+ students’ mental health and self image, not having a space in school to learn about themselves and their identity. These lawmakers believe that banning schools from teaching LGBTQ+ curriculum will stop youth from coming out, when all this bill really does is create more ignorance.

Suppressing LGBTQ+ education will not make anybody more or less gay, it will only alienate students who are struggling with their gender identity or sexual orientation. Setting a basis of LGBTQ+ education for all students will reduce the mental health issues in the LGBTQ+ community.

According to Youth.gov, “Research has found that LGBTQ+ youth are more likely to experience stress and fear in school than their non-LGBTQ+ peers... Research on LGBTQ youth shows that if they experience bullying and victimization, they are more likely to drop out of school, have higher absenteeism, have lower postsecondary education aspirations, have higher levels of depression and anxiety, and have lower self-esteem.”

Denying students LGBTQ+ education puts youth at risk of feeling alone or not welcome at their own schools. By not educating youth, an ignorant and hostile environment is created for LGBTQ+ youth and students with same-sex parents.

HOSA Students Succeed at State, Qualify for Internationals

Maggie Vann
Co-Editor

On April 5 and 6, 2022 the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) held their annual HOSA State Leadership Conference (SLC) in Billings, MT. The mission, according to HOSA, “is to promote career opportunities in the health industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people.”

Ashley Kim, co-president of the Hellgate HOSA Chapter, explained that the SLC is “an annual leadership conference, where students get to display their skills they’ve learned over the course of the school year. The HOSA State Leadership Conference offers competitive events, networking with other students, and celebrates the successes you’ve had throughout the year.”

In order to qualify for the SLC, students underwent a rigorous process. Ellen Parchen, the Hellgate Chapter advisor said, “I appreciate all of the work students have put in on their own time to study for the qualification tests to be eligible for the 1st round of competition. Based on those scores, all of our students qualified this year for the 1st round of judging which required a submission of either a skill video or their completed presentation 1 month before going to state. This is the most rigorous process we have had to qualify to travel to Billings, where students competed in the 2nd round judging.”

From the time Hellgate HOSA was founded in 2016, it has grown by over five times in participant numbers. Kim said, “I’m impressed about the way Hellgate HOSA is going. We had more people than ever before attend State from Hellgate. HOSA is one of those experiences that you never really forget so I’m glad that more people are finding out about it.”



Hellgate HOSA students pose after qualifying for Internationals in Nashville, Tennessee. Photo courtesy of HOSA.

The fifteen students from Hellgate competed in a variety of events, including: Health Professions, Emergency Preparedness, Teamwork and Leadership. Around 300 students from the state attended the SLC and Hellgate students placed top three in over fifteen events.

Students at the SLC also participated in symposiums with various activities, from cadaver labs to suturing to virtual reality, students were able to gain experience with different medical professions and skills first-hand.

Mila McKay, co-president of the Hellgate HOSA Chapter, explained, “My favorite part from the HOSA SLC was the symposiums that all the competitors got to go to on the second day. I was first able to visit a virtual reality lab where I got to put on an Oculus headset and look at a skeleton. I was able to change the settings to see different layers of the body. So for example, I could get a realistic view of the entire muscle structure of the body, veins, and nerves, just to name a few different settings.” McKay added, “The second symposium I went to was a cadaver lab. There were three different cadavers at this lab with varying degrees of dissection. It was really amazing to see and touch different anatomical structures in a way that I’ve never gotten to experience before! Overall, the symposiums provided a unique learning experience very different from standard classroom learning.”

Many students from Hellgate believe that HOSA and the SLC have helped prepare them for their futures in healthcare. McKay said, “HOSA has definitely set me on a path for success in attaining my future goals. I really hope to become either a veterinarian or a veterinary science researcher and joining HOSA has helped me to get a better idea of what my potential future career would look like. It provided me with more hands-on experience of what I would be doing on a daily basis as a practicing veterinarian. I also love being in HOSA because it allows me to connect with a bunch of people who are also interested in health careers and learn about their personal experiences.”

Aside from placing well at the SLC, Kim was also named the 2022-2023 State HOSA President. This is a huge honor that was achieved through hours of hard work, interviews and speeches. She said, “I’m most excited about helping plan and lead the different conferences throughout the year. I’ve already started a list of things I want to

include in next year’s State Leadership Conference as I want to make it the most memorable state conference.”

Thirteen students who participated in the state conference qualified for the International HOSA Conference in June of 2022 in Nashville, Tennessee. This is the first year Hellgate students in HOSA would qualify to travel and compete in Internationals. Parchen said, “What a great year for all of us; I saw great teamwork; great feedback and support for each other getting started, choosing events; and preparing for events.”

If you are interested in healthcare or science centered careers, consider joining HOSA. McKay explained that, “It allows members to get hands-on experience and an idea of what their potential career would actually look like. HOSA is also a great resume builder for anyone looking to stand out for their interest in health and science. The State Leadership Conference (SLC) is super fun and has provided me with unique learning experiences almost impossible to find in the classroom.”

For the rest of the 2022 school year, HOSA will volunteer with various organizations, learn more about health professions and will meet other students from the state who are interested in healthcare careers.

Awards from the State Leadership Conference are listed below:

*Lindsey Woody placed 2nd in Healthy Lifestyle.
Chloe Caldwell placed 1st in Health Education.
Silas Powers placed 1st in Health Education.
Beatrice Shimanek placed 2nd in Public Health.
Kaitlyn Skinner placed 2nd in Public Health.
Laine Banziger placed 3rd in HOSA Bowl and 1st in Pharmacology.
Kaeleigh Starkey placed 3rd in HOSA Bowl.
Juliet Geilen placed 1st in Health Education.
Maggie Vann placed 3rd in HOSA Bowl.
Faith You placed 1st in Biomedical Debate and 2nd in Family Medicine.
Ashley Kim placed 1st in Biomedical Debate, 1st in Nutrition and 1st in Cultural Diversities and Disparities in Health.
Mila McKay placed 1st in Veterinary Science and 3rd in HOSA Bowl.
Anika Smith placed 1st in Biomedical Debate.*



Ashley Kim is Hellgate’s Co-President and was named the 2022 State HOSA President.
Photo by Maggie Vann.

Advanced Problems in Science Students Shine

Ali Caudle
Co-Editor

and junior Ashley Kim is investigating the effect of social isolation on social interaction.

On a day to day basis, students are given class time to work on whatever they need. “There’s very little structure to it. All the students that take this class are very motivated and mostly focused,” said Affleck. “You get to choose what you need to focus on that day and do it instead of someone just giving you a lesson.”

“It’s a really flexible class. It really depends on your schedule and your project. And Ms. Affleck is really good about being very open to moving dates around,” said junior Mila McKay, whose project to create coated sutures with anti-inflammatory drugs was inspired by her passion for veterinary science.

Junior Natalya de la Plaza appreciates the flexibility. “It’s not necessarily easy, but it’s not like a traditional classroom setting or curriculum setting,” she said. “You don’t get punished for late work. I started my project like two months after everybody else because we just couldn’t get stuff working and the right materials. But I’m still in the same place even though I started earlier.”

She’s studying how exposure to high altitude conditions affects red blood cells in deer mice. “I think it’s nice because it’s almost purely passion driven. You get to work and I was lucky enough to find a project that, you know, at the beginning of the year, I didn’t know anything about, but you become so invested in it and you go so deep into it that you can really find a love for it,” said de la Plaza.

There is also a very collaborative feel to the class. Students work together to provide input, advice, guidance and assistance to one another. “The collaborative work in this class has been magnificent,” said Affleck.

She’s relieved this spirit is back, after her first year as the advisor for APS was nearly all online, distanced and divided by the alpha split. “There were very few people in the classroom. So there wasn’t this collaborative feeling like we have this year, which feels really nice where everyone can check each other’s work and they can talk about their ideas,” she said.

“This class has worked so hard, hundreds of hours of their own time, collecting data and writing and editing and making posters, but they’ve also made it really fun. The class is fun. Traveling is fun,” Affleck added.

“They’ve helped each other develop these skills of being able to write very clearly and straightforwardly. They’ve helped each other with editing. They’ve helped each other design

their posters and do their presentations,” she said. “This year has been awesome. Full class, we get to go to science fairs in person, meet students from around the country.”

APS has returned in full strength in the wake of the pandemic, with competitions completely in person. There’s a lot more fun in presenting to a national audience when you get to travel to a big city, rather than hopping on a Zoom call.

They started off the competition season by traveling to Butte in early March for the Regional Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. There, Maxwell and sophomore Quynh McKelvey-Pham, with her project on how genomic imprinting affects cells in mice placentas, competed.

That same weekend, all seven students competed in the Montana Tech Regional Science and Engineering Fair, also in Butte. At Montana Tech RSEF, the class as a whole took home 1st place.

The Montana State Competition was held at the University of Montana on March 28, 2022. There, the Hellgate APS class also placed 1st. Through these regional competitions, some students qualified for National and International Fairs.

On April 20-23, Maxwell, McKelvey-Pham and Affleck traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico, for the National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium, sponsored by the National Science Teaching Association and Department of Defense. As a top two finisher in regionals, Maxwell was selected to present orally to national judges. Additionally, in October 2022 Maxwell will go to the North

American Brain Injuries Symposium in New York City with her mentor.

Meanwhile, juniors Mila McKay and Natalya de la Plaza qualified for an international competition. In the middle of May, Affleck will accompany McKay and de la Plaza to Atlanta, Georgia for the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF).

McKay and de la Plaza shared they both decided to try APS because they wanted to see if scientific research was something they’d like to pursue further, in college and beyond.

“I’d say my favorite part of the class is getting to do higher level research that you’re not allowed to do in really any other class anywhere else at Hellgate. I really like to do some hands-on application of what I’ve been learning. I’ve seen that some of the stuff that I’ve been learning in my classes like AP Bio can be applied to my project,” said McKay. “You can do literally whatever you want in scientific research and you get to work with amazing professors on campus that facilitate your learning.”

Maxwell added that she feels like she has even more experience with scientific writing than her older sister in college. “The experiences you get from APS are unrivaled,” she said. “It’s a great way to do research at that next level or compete or publish potentially at that level without having all the responsibility. Because you’re in high school. So like you’re in this little bubble with your mentor, but you get to do these things that have real world applications,” she said. “I didn’t really think that it’d be as addicting as it is.”



APS students pose with their trophy after winning the state science fair at the University of Montana. Photo courtesy of Natalya de la Plaza.



All seven APS students with their trophy for being the Regional Science Fair Champions at Montana Tech in Butte. Photo courtesy of Natalya de la Plaza.

SAVE Trashion Show

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trashion Show was unable to happen with all of the restrictions. But as of Apr 15, the Trashion show was back up and running.

The winner of the Trashion Show received prizes from different eco-friendly companies such as hydroflasks and stickers from Rockin Rudy's and gift cards from Big Dipper. Ashley Young, Co-President of SAVE said "It really got the whole school excited about being a part of something that was meant to advocate for Earth Week and environmental activism."

"A lot of the school hasn't experienced a Trashion Show, so we really wanted to bring it back." - Kerra Skinner



"We had a lot of prizes and detailed outfits which

Kerra Skinner said that in years prior, the Trashion Show wasn't as focused on the actually recycled outfit aspect of the show.

However, this year, "The people that signed up took it pretty seriously."



Article by Wilson Freer.
Designed by Ali Caudle.

Photos courtesy
of Collin Shontz.

W Makes a Comeback

“You missed out if you didn’t go!” - Ashley Young

SAVE Presidents, Ashley Young and Kerra Skinner, said it was very exciting to watch the whole show come together after lots of hard effort to plan and advertise for it.

“I love to plan things. I put a ton of planning parts like I made each [SAVE] head a separate document and I like to do all the social media advertisement which I thought was really helpful,” said Young.

“We really didn’t think that many people would come so when we saw the gym starting to fill up, we were like, oh that’s nice that people are actually interested in this and want to see it.” - Ashley Young



and a lot of the contestants had very h was super cool.” - Kerra Skinner

The winner was decided by a panel of three judges, scoring by three criteria: Creativity, Stage Presence, and Durability.

Senior Emmaline Derry won the Trashion Show wearing an outfit designed by Junior Anni Kendrick.



While some things were different this year than in the past, such as the timing and where it was hosted, SAVE is hopeful that the Trashion Show will get back to the big school event that it once was.

Throughout the following week, the SAVE club hosted a raffle and climate Kahoot promoting bike, walk, and bus week with other prizes from Rockin Rudy’s and Big Dipper. They hope to host another climate Kahoot for similar prizes. These events were part of the SAVE club’s Earth Week promotion, and the Trashion Show was just the start.

Say What?! Hellgate Teachers' Pets

Maggie Vann
Co-Editor

Pets are a huge part of almost everyone's lives. They make you smile on days you're feeling down, can help manage depression and loneliness and ultimately become family members. Pets vary in size, shape, species and personality, from bearded dragons to dogs to goats and llamas, they are sure to cheer you up. Some teachers and administrative staff provided photos and stories about some of their pets!

Judson Miller (Principal)



"We have 2 rescue pets: The cat (Hobbes) is from the Humane Society and is 8 pounds of mean. He rules the downstairs and only allows the puppy to come inside. All of our friends' dogs are attacked on site and now afraid to come to the house. He is great with people though. The puppy (Rally) was a rescue from the Missoula Animal Shelter and is now full grown. She is a Catahula, Husky, Cattle Dog mix from the Hiline and has a ton of personality. She is very stubborn, playful, and loves exercise; she also loves the cat. They play together all day everyday. This picture is from about a year ago and Rally is full grown at 50 pounds now."

Heather Cheney (Gym and Health Teacher)



"I have a bearded dragon named TJ2. The original TJ was named 'thea junior' after our dog Thea (my kids really like that name apparently) but she died the first day we had her, so TJ2 is her replacement. Bearded dragons are considered the 'dogs of the reptiles' in that they love their people and have pretty funny little personalities. Ours definitely knows our voices and gives good side eye looks when annoyed. She wanders around the house and finds random places to hide or hang with the dog. The picture with me is when we found her hiding behind some cookbooks after she went missing for 3 days lol."

Katie Wyskiver (French Teacher)



"I have three dogs- Otto, Greta and Shady Grove; a cat- Annie; ten chickens; two goats named Jack and Earl after my grandfathers, and a rescued Canadian goose named Fern.

Earl is a sweet, loving goat- he likes to be held, pet, and will only take food and medicine if you hold him. Jack is stubborn, loud and in the way- he will eat your shoelaces and zippers on your coat if he can. They love to eat everything, and they go crazy for pine needles. They love to go on walks and follow us everywhere.

We found Fern in our yard when she was a day old, and we think she was washed away in the irrigation channels at the ranch across the street from where we live. She "attached" to my daughter, and they spent hours together during quarantine cuddling up. Fern can't fly because her left wing flaps out (a result of a domestic diet), but she guards the chickens. If a hawk or eagle flies over the pen, she honks loudly until the chickens head into the barn!"

Teachers' Pets cont.

Jason Van Hyning (English Teacher)



“My crew of fuzzballs. . . Two pups (Butters and Biggy the Butterscotch Bear), four kitties (Boy and Wendy a.k.a The Princess of Darkness, Tesla, and Mamba), one llama (Raj), two goats (Bouncy and Bucky), and twelve robot chickens from outer space (Raven and crew). With the exception of the chicks, all are rescue babies.

If I told you about everyone I'd be typing til spring- so I'll speak to a few. . . Raj came to me from the llama sanctuary out of Corvallis several years ago when my old llama, Willy, passed away. Raj's first job was to rescue my goat Trixie (since passed) from dying of sadness when she lost her llama, and he did, admirably. But Raj does more than just rescue goats, he rescues anyone who's having a bad day.

Wendy (black and white kitty) came to me from Animeals a few years ago. I soon learned I was the priest who exorcised a demon from their shelter. She's straight out of Dante's Inferno, somewhere abouts the Ninth Ring. Seriously. But they kicked her out for being supremely naughty, so I took her in :)

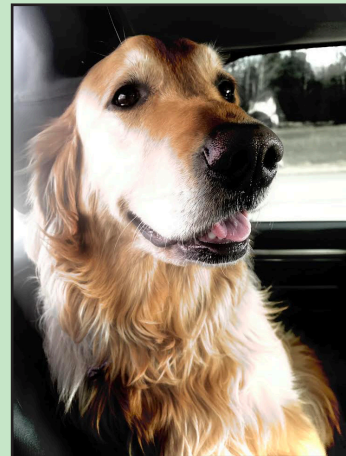
Fun fact- Bouncy and Bucky like to ride around on Raj's back. They enjoy it tremendously, Raj, not so much.”

Zhinin Barreto (Spanish Teacher)



“What do you mean pets? Taita and Pacha are my best friends! Ain't no pets en mi casa, we are all fam. Taita is a mix of craziness (border collie/mini aussie/blue heeler) and Pacha is a wild kitty. Taita likes to cuddle and run as much as he likes deer poop. Pretty much the only reason why he runs is because he gets to nibble some deer poop on the way. Pacha is the bully of my neighborhood even though she is only 9lb. You know, she never wins a fight, but always attacks first. She is kinda cool with me most of the time. Yo, get this, Taita can throw his own frisbee for himself. For realz, he runs fast with it in his mouth, throws it up to the air, and catches it! He's just a cool guy living his best life, and needs no friends to have fun.”

Kasey Arceniega (Art Teacher)



Arceniega has two dogs, a Golden Retriever and a Lab/Akita mix. Their names are Biscuit and Perri. She said, “Biscuit loves her stuffed animals, swimming, people and food. Perri is athletic, she loves her frisbee and gives good hugs. They love each other but there is one toy (out of several) they are constantly fighting over- a stuffed pig with its ears chewed off. I don't know what it is about that toy but I've had to put it on top of the fridge several times because they each have gotten too possessive over it. They make us laugh everyday and are truly part of our family.”



A Guide to the Best Hiking Trails in Missoula

Gabi Wilson
Reporter

As people who live in Montana, many of us tend to take our access to open space for granted. We should be grateful to have so many trails surrounding us that we can get to with no problem. There are many hiking places around Missoula that you need to check out!

The 'M' is one of the most popular trails which is right downtown. The 'M' stands for the University of Montana. It is right next to the University and not hard to find as it is a large 'M' on a mountain. The hike is pretty simple and can be really good for a quick, easy hike. It only takes about 20-30 minutes to get to the top and the way down is a lot quicker. There are many benches along the way where you can stop to take a break, drink some water, or look at the views from the mountain.



A view of Missoula from the top of the 'M'.
Photo by Maggie Vann.

The view at the 'M' is beautiful as you get to see the whole town of Missoula. This is the best place to eat a snack, and hang out with the glorious view of our beautiful town. If you want more of a challenge with this hike, you can take the pathway to the left. Many parts of this trail are steep, so be careful. If you are looking to do a bit of a longer hike, you can continue up past the 'M' to the very top of Mount Sentinel.

There is the "M" and of course there is the 'L'. The 'L' stands for Loyola Sacred Heart Catholic High School. The 'L' is a simple hike. I would say this hike is a calf burner and slightly harder than the 'M', but it is still definitely a good one for the view at the 'L'. When you are on this hike, you can almost always see paragliders as they frequently fly around these hills during warmer times of the year. There are many buttercups and yellow bells along the way that bloom in the early spring.



A view of Missoula from the 'L' trail.
Photo by Gabi Wilson.

Waterworks is a classic hike. You can access this trail from a few different spots which all lead to the top. My favorite access point is just before you get on the highway. There is a small parking lot to park in. This hike is slightly difficult in the beginning, but once you are past the switchbacks, it is pretty easy-going. You can see an old Montana homestead along the way. The top is very beautiful as you get a view of town from a different angle than the 'M' and the 'L'. You can choose to hike to the large peace sign on this hike as well.



The peace sign on the Waterworks trail.
Photo by Gabi Wilson.

The Rattlesnake has many great hikes, but I recommend the one in Lincoln Hills. The 4-mile loop is a really great hike with a few different views. There are some places along the way where the hike gets a bit more difficult, but it is pretty manageable the whole way. I really recommend this hike because it is so different throughout, but beautiful everywhere. There are some

spots in the shade and some in the sun. This hike is very beautiful in the late spring when many flowers are blooming. You can typically see sunflowers and prairie fire flowers all along the trail.

Pattee Canyon has many great hikes, but I recommend the one at the beginning, the Barmeyer trail. It can be a difficult hike, but it is worth it for the great workout and the chance to be outside. This hike is another one that is better to do in the late spring because it is more green and has more flowers. There are many great views along the way as you can see into Pattee Canyon at some places. There is also a lookout near the top of this hike to view the town of Missoula.

The Ravine hike is a great trail to go on on a hot day. The trail is very shaded which makes it great to hike on a scorching day. During the summer it can be hard to hike because it is too hot outside. This trail is very shaded, which makes hiking easier. You can access this trail in Grant Creek. If you go past Snowbowl, the parking for this trail will be on the right up the road a bit. There is limited parking as there are only about six spots.

Make sure to get outside and take some hikes during the nice spring weather sometime soon. When you are on the trails, be kind and respectful to others and the trail. Where is your favorite place to hike around Missoula?

Missoula Robotics Team Competes in Boise

Win Duerk
Reporter

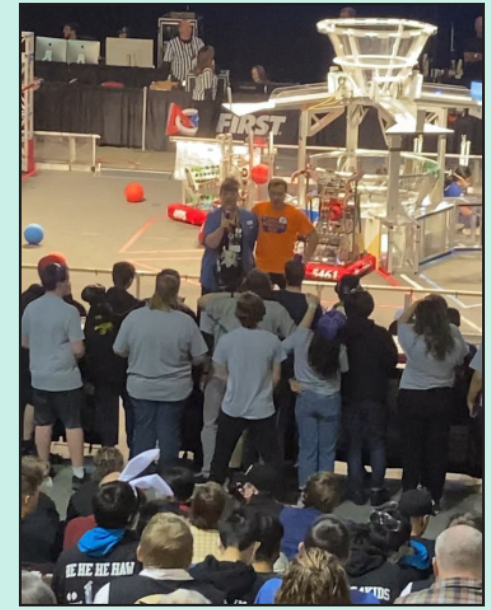
Did you know that we have students at Hellgate who program and engineer robots? The Missoula Robotics Team recently returned from placing 4th at their regional competition in Boise, Idaho, where they made a robot to complete multiple challenges. This was their first competition due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Everett Smith, Nathan Ritchlin and Nathaniel Bruns were pleased with their team's performance this year. Additional Hellgate students representing the Missoula robotics team included Bram Cunningham, Quynh McKelvey-Pham and Adam Story.

Ritchlin explained what they do at competitions: "We build a robot to competition specific standards and basically it's a game where you try to score points with a team of two other robots, so you build your robot based on those parameters and hope to win with your alliance." Each alliance is made up of three teams and there were eight alliances in the playoffs.

"In January we get a rule book and a video that shows what we have to do and then we build a robot to satisfy those requirements. This year we had to build a robot to pick up balls and score them into a goal. There was an upper goal with more points that was harder to get balls into and a lower goal that was worth less points and easier to score into and then the robot also needs to be able to climb up monkey bars at the end of a match," said Smith.

This was Bruns's first year being on the robotics team, and he said that he was very happy with the results of the competition, given that he's a new member of the team. He added that at the last competition the Missoula team attended, in Salt Lake City, they got "destroyed" by teams with more experience and resources. Overall placing fourth is a big achievement for the Missoula Robotics Team because they were competing as the only team in Montana against skilled teams from Idaho, Washington and California.

Although COVID-19 limited the Missoula Robotics Team to fewer competitions, they still made the most of their trip to Boise and will continue to look forward to having more competitions each year as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.



Competition in Boise.
Courtesy of Nathan Ritchlin.



Missoula Robotics Team.
Courtesy of MRT 3216.

Hellgate Graduate Zia Blue Impresses American Idol Judges

Maggie Vann
Co-Editor

During your lifetime you've probably caught yourself gazing at the television in awe as singers from around the country made their appearance on American Idol, in front of the world's most famous singers.

Zia Blue, a Hellgate alum, found herself doing the same thing. However, for Blue, this dream became a reality when the TV show sent her a surreal Instagram message and asked if she would audition on the 2022 season premier.

After graduating from Hellgate High School in 2020, Blue took a gap year and is currently finishing her freshman year at the University of Puget Sound in Washington. She grew up in the small town of Ovando, Montana, where she started her debut.

Blue attended her first concert when she was around the age of two. "I've been singing ever since I can remember. I don't really remember a specific time or place that I began to sing. It's kind of always been incorporated into my life. I grew up in a pretty musical family and music has always been a passion in our family," she said.

Aside from her family, some of the singers Blue took inspiration from were Lianne La Havas, Alicia Keys, Aretha Franklin, Cynthia Erivo, Cardi B and Lucky Daye. However, she has a huge list of singers and songwriters that inspired her.

Blue's appreciation for music grew from solely singing into also playing the guitar. She has been playing for about 11 years, and although her voice is her "preferable instrument" her talent for guitar also shines through.

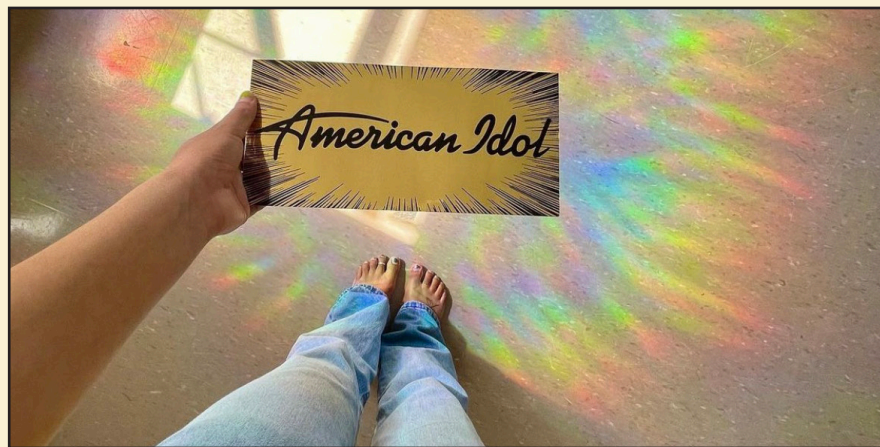
While most singers have personal songwriters, Blue has also written a few of her own songs. She enjoys writing ballads, or songs narrating a short story through short stanzas. Her most recent song was written through yet another talent, the piano. It's "about a boy who kind of basically broke my heart. I shouldn't have been invested, but my poor little heart did get invested, and like glass, he smashed it."

Blue's folk, bluegrass and R&B sole-style singing made her the ideal candidate for American Idol. She was identified through Instagram as a potential candidate and was surprised to be chosen to compete in one of the world's best singing shows.

Before the in-person auditions that most people watch from their couch at home, Blue had two pre-auditions that took place on Zoom. After making it past the online



Blue not only writes some of her own songs, but she also plays guitar.
Photo courtesy of Zia Blue.



Blue was given a golden ticket that qualified her for the Show Stop round of auditions in Hollywood. Photo courtesy of Zia Blue.

auditions, she moved onto the next phase of American Idol.

Blue said, at her first in-person audition, "I didn't really stay calm [and] I was very nervous." But despite being nervous, she said, "It was so exhilarating, I was beaming from ear to ear when I walked up to the door."

The first song Blue sang was "Man Like You" by Tom Misch, but after her nerves took over, Lionel Richie asked her to sing a second song. So, not only did she have to sing one song, but she was told by one of America's most famous singers that she should sing another. Although she was nervous, Blue nailed her second song, which was Ed Sheeran's version of "Rain". She said, "With that song, I kind of got more into the swing of things [and] in the hang of, you know, being stared at by Lionel Richie and Luke Bryan and Katie Perry."

What most people don't see from the TV in their living room is the amount of waiting that goes into auditioning. She said, "A lot of what you don't see is that we were waiting for hours to just go and take a few quick photos or go and practice in a room solo for like 10 minutes. But we would literally sit around for five or six hours."

However, Blue still had a phenomenal experience and said, "My favorite part was getting feedback from the judges and also meeting all the other contestants." Blue also met some of her favorite singers that were also competing and said, "It was just really crazy to be among those kinds of people."

After the first in-person round of auditions, Blue received notice that she was awarded a Golden Ticket, which sent her to the Show Stop round in Hollywood. However, "Hollywood week was absolutely exhausting. I was not cut out for Hollywood week unfortunately. I couldn't fall asleep, I was so anxious," she said. "It was really hard being away from home and trying to live out of a hotel."

So, although Blue's American Idol debut ended in Hollywood with a sickness that got the best of her vocal cords, she received advice from Bruno Mars' pianist, worked with John Baptist's vocal coach and met the next American Idol, whoever that may be.

Blue is among some of the few Montanans to have competed on American Idol, among even fewer to have made it to the Show Stop round and the first Hellgate graduate to be on the show. She is still making incredible music, which you can find on her Instagram @ziablue. She is also hoping to make a Spotify account soon, which will be under the name Zia Blue as well.

The Good Knight Theatre Company Stuns With Disney's The Little Mermaid

Julia Key
and
Alexander Blaide
Reporters

The Good Knight Theatre Company performed Disney's *The Little Mermaid* musical as their last show of the year. The cast and crew started rehearsing in mid-January to prepare for the show.

The Good Knight Theatre Company tried out a new double casting strategy during this show. As the Omicron COVID variant was still rampant during the audition process, Laramie Dean, the theater director, implemented the double casting as a precaution.

Should any principal actors have gotten sick, they would have a backup performer ready to go as Ariel, Eric, Sebastian, or whoever else was gone. This precaution didn't end up being needed as COVID numbers declined, and the performances were split between the two casts to give both casts the performances they deserved after working for the roles.

This production also included a live pit orchestra. According to Hazel Seagrave, who played Ursula, "We love the pit orchestra, and I want to give a shout out to them because I know on our side it's hard to work with live musicians, but I think for them it's even harder to work with us because not only do they have to learn the music and play it, which is a challenge in itself, they also have to adjust to each way the actors do it (perform each song), it changes every time, plus it's double cast, and each actor does it differently, it seems really difficult, but they are doing such a good job."

Working with a pit orchestra didn't seem to be the only problem. "What wasn't an issue (during the production of the show)," said Morgan Best, who played Ariel. According to the cast, the road to putting on this musical was a bumpy one. "I think our show motto was 'We'll figure it out' or 'It'll be fine,'" said Nick Monsos, who played Prince Eric.

Costuming was another issue during the musical's production, according to Seagrave. "Going into this I thought (costuming) was going to be easy and simple, because we got to borrow a lot of the costumes from MCT (Missoula Community Theater) from when they did their production of the *Little Mermaid*, but it was quite the opposite because they gave us a



Prince Eric (Kilian Kroenke) bows to ask Ariel (Gretchen Morgan) for a dance.
Photo courtesy of Rachel Morgan.

very random assortment of costumes. We didn't get a Flounder costume, so there was the fact of finding the costumes, which was hard with a show as unique as this."

But despite all of the show's hardships, the cast worked together as a team to put on a great show. "I think theater is a great way to get to know people around you, especially coming into high school, right after COVID," said Prince Eric actor Kilian Kroenke.

For Ursula actress Kiara Johnson this musical was her first production. "(Working on the show) is incredible, everyone is so amazing and supportive," Johnson said. But for some, this show was their last. "It's so fun, especially being a senior, seeing underclassmen and people who haven't done a show before come in and do this (show)," said Monsos.

According to stage manager Mila Yednak, "The whole theater experience is great, because you get to see everyone grow into their characters, and everyone makes relationships that last forever, it's really great to see people find themselves and make new friends."

With four shows, including opening night in the middle of the week, the Hellgate and wider Missoula community turned up ready for a good show. Even opening night was packed, where they received a standing ovation. Then on each subsequent night, the audience seemed to grow more and more. On Saturday, the closing night, there were 450 seats filled, nearly a full house. The audience was ecstatic to see everyone and to have musicals back at Hellgate.

“Tick Tick Boom” Review: Watch It. That’s All.

Alexander Blaide
Reporter

Getting older is one of those things that we all dread. There’s no specific reason why we fear it, it just happens. You want to do all the things you set out to do and as you get older, it feels like you might not have enough time to do that, as if time itself is ticking down and you can feel it.

“Tick Tick Boom” was the second musical of Jonathan Larson, a musical theater writer and part time waiter. Originally, the show wasn’t a musical; instead, it was actually a one-man show consisting of both monologues and songs. In it, Jonathan talks about his life as an aspiring composer and the stress of not doing anything of note by his 30th birthday. The show never saw more than Off-Broadway before being stopped to focus on Larson’s next show “Rent.” Unfortunately, the morning of “Rent’s” first Off-Broadway preview, Larson died from an aortic dissection, basically when blood seeps into the layers of the blood vessels, forcing them apart. He was just 10 days shy of his 36th birthday. Shortly after Larson’s death, fellow playwright David Auburn was asked to adapt the original “Tick Tick Boom” show into an actual play.

In 2001, “Tick Tick Boom” opened Off-Broadway as a three actor musical starring Raul Esparza as Jon, Jerry Dixon as Michael, and Amy Spanger as Susan. The play follows the same autobiographical aspects of the one-man show and follows as Jon tries to get his own musical “Superbia” off the ground. At the same time, his best friend Michael has given up acting and pursued a career in marketing. Jon’s girlfriend Susan wants to leave New York City to be a dance instructor and Jon is struggling with how quickly his 30th birthday is arriving. As the “Superbia” workshop rehearsals get closer and closer, Jon and Susan split up. The workshop happens and no one wants to produce the show.

Michael and Jon fight over Jon wanting to leave music behind because Jon feels that he has no more time, the argument ends with Michael saying he’s HIV-positive. The next day is the day Jon was dreading most; his 30th birthday has arrived. Jon decides to keep writing music after getting a call from Stephen Sondheim.

The 2001 cast album is available on Spotify and is a very good musical to listen to, but in 2018, Andrew Garfield was brought onto what would become Lin-Manuel Miranda’s directorial debut, the 2021 film adaptation of “Tick Tick Boom.” This film is more based on the original one-man show that Larson wrote and stars Garfield as Jonathan Larson. Alongside Garfield, the film stars Robin de Jesus as Michael, Alexandra Shipp as Susan and Vanessa Hudgens as Karesa. The film follows as Jonathan struggles to finish his musical “Superbia” and make a name for himself. Along the way, he sees the flaws in the world and writes down his thoughts in a notepad, these themes eventually coming back into play in “Rent.” The film cuts between the actual movie and Andrew as Larson, so the film we see is what he talks about on stage, if that makes sense. Just like the one-man show, the movie has music all performed by the cast.

The music is catchy and incredibly performed. The film immediately hooks you in with the opening number, “30/90,” a very catchy song lamenting getting older. All the music is very energetic and performed brilliantly, especially the two live songs in the film. “Boho Days” and “Why” were performed live by Garfield on set because of the weight the songs carried. Filmed in just two takes, the song “Why” is Jonathan questioning his decisions to write musical theater, especially after learning that his friend Michael was HIV-positive. Around the same time he filmed that scene, Andrew Garfield’s mom had passed away. In interviews, Andrew explained that he was singing that song for her. “Boho Days” is a song about living the life as a poor, creative individual and having to put



“Tick Tick Boom” Release Poster.
Courtesy of IMDB.

up with terrible living conditions; for example, living with tons of roommates. The song was performed acapella and had to be done on set because of it. The other actors all sang their songs incredibly, especially Robin de Jesus and Alexandra Shipp. Alexandra only gets one song (it would be two, but the second song was cut) with “Come to Your Senses,” a song originally meant for “Superbia,” the musical that Jonathan is working on during the movie. The whole soundtrack is again available on Spotify and is a joy to listen to and perform.

This film is available on Netflix and is incredible. Anyone who enjoys musicals and theater should just take some time and watch it. Upon watching the movie, you will see why Andrew Garfield was nominated for his Oscar. For the directorial debut of Lin-Manuel Miranda, this film is a fantastic start to his directing career.

Are Live Action Disney Remakes Needed?

Asa Stuart
Reporter

Since 2015, Disney has pumped out a remake of a classic fairytale every year with the trend continuing into this year. With so many remakes coming out, many people wonder if Disney is running out of ideas, or are they just trying to make money? When a new remake comes out, everyone knows about it, everyone watches it, and it's either highly rated and recommended, or highly criticized. Recently every Disney remake has been criticized for bad retelling of the original story, most recently Cruella and Mulan. Many of these remakes have changed the plot and musical aspect that made the originals so magical. Without the songs and magical aspects, Disney movies are left feeling hollow and wrong.

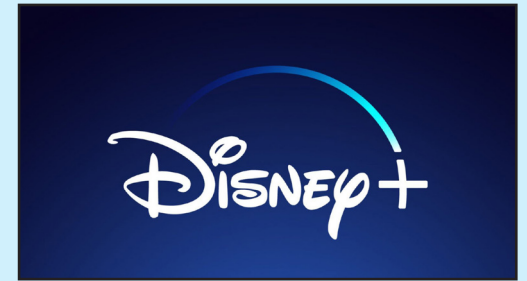
In Disney's 2020 live remake of Mulan, they removed Mushu, arguably the best character, and the romance between Mulan and Li Shang, who wasn't even in the movie, because of the uncomfortable and unfortunate implications of Mulan falling in love with her captain. Mulan was not a musical, like the classic movie, so we did

not get the iconic song "I'll Make a Man Out of You" and the movie felt empty without the songs. Some remakes have gotten away with straying from the musical norm of Disney fairytales, such as the 2015 Cinderella, which was a magical rendition of the classic fairy tale.

Other movies that revamped the classic tales in a new and interesting way were Maleficent, Pete's Dragon, The Jungle Book, both 1994 and 2016 versions, Alice in Wonderland - the 2010 version and its sequel - and Christopher Robin. Recent movies such as Mulan, Aladdin, and Dumbo failed to hit the mark as the plot fell short without music, or even when they had music, it didn't work.

The movies that get bad reviews are because of claims Disney puts no real care into the plot. Some movies are carbon copies of the original with a few modern changes, or some are modern adaptations that rewrote the classic story in a way that was in no way necessary, such as the 2021 Cruella movie. The Cruella movie would have been an amazing movie, if there wasn't the background of the classic Cruella, a family-hating, dog-murdering older lady.

Disney movies sometimes just feel like a cash grab, a way to bring back people every year. Outside of fairy tale



Courtesy of trustedreviews.com.

remakes, Disney has made amazing animated movies, such as the just released "Turning Red," an animated movie about a 13-year-old girl, who is the daughter of first generation immigrants, and turns into a giant red panda when she gets excited.

While Disney movies are always highly anticipated, do they ever live up to the hype? Are Disney movies good because it's a good movie with a good plot and good cast? Or is it because it's a copy of a movie we watched as kids, so we feel nostalgic watching it again?

What's Up With Netflix?

Gabi Wilson and Wilson Freer
Reporters

Netflix is on a steady decline. The streaming service has been heavily criticized for the amount of popular or very widely liked shows that have been removed in the past few years.

Not only are popular shows being removed, but viewers will now have to start paying more for the remaining shows and Netflix Originals. The basic plan will be increased by \$1 to \$9.99, the standard plan by \$1.50 to \$15.49, and the premium plan by \$2 to \$19.99 per month.

In addition to the price increases, the company is also cracking down on password and account sharing. They said that account sharing isn't going to stop, but if you want to share your account with people, you'll have to start paying additional fees.

It's important to note that Netflix lost over 700,000 subscribers when it pulled out of Russia. This abrupt drop in viewership is also coinciding with a steady decline in viewership as pandemic restrictions ease and people are continuing to find entertainment in other services or even outside. They expect to lose another 2 million subscribers at the end of quarter two.

That being said, it still seems like Netflix is going for the 'quantity over quality' mindset that has previously worked for them. But it seems like having lots of shows that are just fine is not better than having fewer shows that are good quality. There are so many streaming services today that if you don't have the shows that people enjoy thoroughly or shows that capture viewers' attention, you will lose many patrons.



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Personally, there are enough shows that I like on Netflix that still make me think it's worth paying for, but that number of shows seems to be declining, and at some point, it just won't be worth it anymore.

What bothers me the most about the lack of great shows is that Netflix has a \$17 billion budget every year for their shows and movies. You'd think that would be enough to generate at least a few good ones every year, but this just seems to be getting rarer and rarer. I'll admit that they do have some good shows that are popular and I like such as 'Bridgerton' or 'Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt,' but then again, it seems like money is wasted on things like the 'He's All That' remake with Addison Rae, or 'Tall Girl 2'. One 'Tall Girl' was plenty for me and I think Plenty for quite a few people.

I understand that slowing the account sharing might lead to some other people purchasing their own accounts, but I feel like it will lose more people than it will gain which will just put more hurt on the company.

I think that at this point, Netflix needs to offer something that other services don't, or even just offer what all the other services offer, to save the company from falling off the top of the streaming food chain.

To me, it just seems like Netflix is trying to do everything it can to cling to the success it once had dominating the now vast streaming service market.

Mogul Ski Season Comes to a Close

Win Duerk
Reporter

Winter sports are coming to an end. One of them, mogul skiing, is another sport that is more unknown than traditional sports at Hellgate. One of the mogul skiers at Hellgate is Rex Arnot. He said he has had a good year with lots of big competitions and he had been looking forward to Junior Olympics and then Nationals, where he would compete with Olympians.

Ollie Long, another mogul skier at Hellgate, was also excited about the coming competitions. "I've felt pretty good about my season so far. I started off with some good finishes but not quite what I was looking for with some second places, so then I started grinding more and ended up with some first place finishes, so that was fun to end the regional season at divisionals in Bridger Bowl," said Long.

Long gave a run down on how the sport



Rex Arnot competing this year.
Photo courtesy of Rex Arnot.

works, "You start with your top section of bumps which transitions into the top jump, I like to do a cork on that, then you transition into a longer middle section of bumps, then your bottom air, I like to do a big back mute, then you finish off with a final section of bumps."

Looking back on his season he said, "One of my favorite results or competitions was the Park City competition, and I got second and first against a US ski team member which was a really fun competition with the Montana Crew there."

Both Arnot and Long have had impressive seasons, but the most significant competitions are the Junior Olympics before spring break and Nationals. Arnot explained, "Junior Olympics is the top 50 people under 18 in the US with only a certain amount of spots allocated for each state, so there is a singles day where you go down the run alone and the next day is duels day where you race an opponent." Asking Arnot about the scoring he said, "Judging is based on 60% turns (having your knees together), 20% airs which are your tricks and 20% speed."

As the final competitions were closing in, Long and Arnot felt good about their seasons so far and felt prepared to compete at the national level. Long said, "I've already accomplished a lot of my goals but I think the main thing I'm looking forward to is just having fun. It's gonna be in Park City so I know that course pretty well, and I'm looking to lay down a sweet run and hopefully make the finals or even place top ten."

Unfortunately the competition didn't go as planned for Arnot or Long. Upon his return, Long says that Rex Arnot got injured on one of his runs and that the competition was canceled due to COVID-19. Although the conclusion of the ski season was disappointing, both boys have had admirable seasons overall and felt that the unfortunate ending didn't devalue their seasons overall.



Ollie Long performing air
in competition.
Photo courtesy of Ollie Long.



Ollie Long performing a
jump at Park City.
Photo courtesy of Ollie Long.

Missoula Lacrosse Community Grows

Asa Stuart
Reporter

Missoula Mustangs, have teams for kindergarten through eighth grade players for both boys and girls. Missoula Wild and Spartan Lacrosse are the combined teams of the high schools in Missoula.

The Missoula Wild includes Hellgate High School and Big Sky High School students and Spartan includes Sentinel High School and Loyola Sacred Heart students. Both Missoula Wild and Spartan Lacrosse have varsity teams for both girls and boys.

Since lacrosse is not a sport that most parents put their kids in at a young age, many kids start playing through their siblings or through friends. “I started lacrosse to feel more connected to my brother and family,” said Julianne Lane, a player on the Missoula Wild team.

“I play [lacrosse] because it makes me happy and I love the people,” said Krystyna Seaman, who also plays on the Missoula Wild team. “It’s just really a fun thing to do with the people you like and the feeling of improving and playing a sport you



Jules Lane defends against a Spartan player. Photo courtesy of John Arnold.

Lacrosse in Missoula is nothing new, but has recently gained a new way for it to grow. The Sports Barn, formerly known as the Missoula Indoor Sports Arena, is under new ownership and is the official home of the Griz Lacrosse team. The Sports Barn owners, Ryan and Amy Hanavan are working on upgrading and developing the turf field, which is the only one in Missoula. The goal of the field is to give kids and adults opportunities for sports and year-round fun. Along with the turf field, they offer a professional golf simulator and in-house leagues of any game that can be played on turf, such as soccer, lacrosse, kickball, flag football, and many more.

Missoula has three lacrosse teams, one for youth levels and two for high school level playing.

The Missoula Lacrosse Club, also known as the

love makes it even better.”

Since there is only one league for youth players, those who stay with lacrosse until high school will continue to play with the same people and form the necessary relationships for a good team.

Missoula has several lacrosse programs already, but with four high schools, there could be an opportunity for more teams, more players, and more ways for people to play. “We have a lot of potential in our city and state and if we could get a lot more people playing, more teams and a longer season, I think that we could be even better and possibly go and play harder teams out of state,” said Seaman.

Unless you try out for a national team, which many do, and make, such as Lane who joined a Montana-Wyoming team to play games nationally, the only opportunities to play out of state are in tournaments. In tournaments, teams are from Montana, such as the Bozeman Lacrosse team, with one or two from out of state, such as the Sandpoint Lacrosse team from Idaho.

Lacrosse is an amazing sport that has been around in Missoula for many years, but still has the opportunity to grow into something even bigger and better.



Missoula Wild celebrates their win against the Spartans on April 15th.

Photo courtesy of John Arnold.

QUIZ: Which Hellgate admin are you the most like?

Answer the questions, then see who your responses line up with the most!

What is your favorite activity outside of school?

- a. Anything in the outdoors
- b. Hiking in the mountains
- c. Supporting live music, especially at the Wilma or Kettlehouse Amphitheater
- d. Riding my bike and hanging out with friends at good restaurants

What is your dream vacation location?

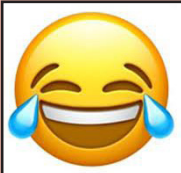

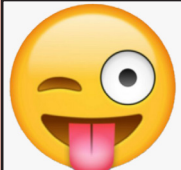
- a. It sounds trite, but I'm living my dream vacation. It is tough to beat Montana!
- b. I love Italy, but also exploring different locations in Europe
- c. An RV trip around the US & Canada
- d. New Zealand

If you wrote a book, what genre would it be?

- a. An academic book about education
- b. Historical fiction
- c. Instruction manual (just how my brain works!)
- d. Comedy autobiography

What is your favorite emoji?

- a.

What is an emoji?
- b. 
- c. 
- d. 

If you could spend a day with somebody famous, who would it be?

- a. My family is not famous, but that's who I would choose. One never knows when it won't be an option anymore
- b. Maya Angelou
- c. Bill Murray. Golfing & Cub's game!
- d. Jesus

What is your favorite ice cream flavor?

- a. Chocolate ice cream (Haagen-Daz)
- b. Anything with caramel
- c. Ben & Jerry's Chubby Hubby
- d. Mint chocolate chip

What was your favorite subject when you were in high school?

- a. History, English & Trades Class
- b. Health and PE
- c. Science
- d. Math

Where is the best place in Montana?

- a. Montana itself! & Hellgate of course
- b. Flathead Lake when the sun sets in the summer months
- c. Missoula - it has everything I need and most of the things I want in life
- d. Glacier National Park

Mostly A's?



Judson Miller, Principal

Mostly B's?



Hallie Koppang, AP/IB Coordinator

Mostly C's?



Nick Laatsch, Activities Director

Mostly D's?



Susan Bageant, Assistant Principal